

SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE

February 1, 2007 - 5:30 P.M. – Council Chambers - Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

OPEN FORUM / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

AGENDA ADOPTION:

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1. Emergency Management Report (Bryan Rush)
 - A. Tropical Depression Ernesto
 - B. Planning
 - C. Communications
 - D. Training
 2. Basic Emergency Operations Plan, Recommendations by Mr. John Nelson Jester
 3. Scope of Services, Update the Emergency Operations Plan
 4. Closed Meeting in Accordance with Section 2.2-3711(A) (1) & (17) of the code of Virginia. Police Legal Matters
 5. Committee member comments

ADJOURN:

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

**Submitted by Bryan Rush
January 26, 2007**

TROPICAL DEPRESSION ERNESTO

Thanks to Mr. Mike Cosby for some hard work in compiling damage figures for Public Assistance, the Town's request has been approved and a payment of \$16,008.03 should be received very soon. This will help reimburse the Town for debris removal and emergency protective measures resulting from Ernesto.

PLANNING

The Emergency Operations Plan has been reviewed with the help of Mr. Nelson Jester a community volunteer with years of experience in such activities that he gained from working at the Pentagon. Mr. Jester has given a detailed report with suggestions for committee review and action. I have attached the report for review.

With upcoming changes to the EOP, the EOP will need to be completely re-written. Due to lack of staff time to complete such a daunting task, I have contacted Mrs. Elaine Meil, Director of Planning at the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission and spoke with her about re-writing the Town's EOP, after the committee makes final changes. Mrs. Meil quoted me a price of \$11,000. I have submitted the quote with this report. I recommend, budgeting the amount in the FY-08 budget for completion and adoption by Council. The target completion date should be December 3, 2007, which is the December Council Meeting. This should give us a very workable document that should be maintained and updated yearly in house by the Town's Planner with the help of the Emergency Services Coordinator and Department Heads.

COMMUNICATIONS

The 2005 ODP Grant money was used to renew the Town's contract with Globalstar for the three satellite phones. We now have service until December 31, 2007.

The satellite phone service is another item that needs to be budgeted in the FY-08 budget due to lessening grant funds available to localities. It is possible that the Town may not receive any 2006 ODP grant money.

The phones need to remain in service in order that the Town continue operations after a natural or man made disaster that could render usual communications useless.

Both Chincoteague High School and Chincoteague Elementary School have received NOAA weather radios as part of the NOAA/DHS initiative to place weather radios in all public schools. These radios are located in the main office of the schools to warn in the event of a weather emergency as well as other emergencies broadcasted on NOAA weather radio.

TRAINING

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management has secured grant funds to conduct a table top exercise for the shore in early 2007. VDEM has contracted with CRA, Inc. to design the exercise. The initial planning meeting was held January 10, 2007. The exercise will be named ESVAX 07 and focus on immediately post landfall of a hurricane out to fourteen days. The exercise will occur on Wednesday, March 14, 2007 at 09:00 here at the community center.

In order to make the exercise a valuable learning experience and test the Town's capabilities, participation from the Director of Emergency Services, Emergency Services Coordinator, Town Manager, Finance Director, Public Works Director, Chief of Police, Building and Zoning Administrator, Harbor Master, Fire Chief, and members of Council are imperative. Remember this is going to be a recovery operation so we need to see how we would recover and what we need to improve on.

Recommendations for Town of Chincoteague
Basic Emergency Operations Plan
By John Nelson Jester

Introduction

This report contains the results of my assessment of the Town of Chincoteague's Emergency Operations Plan (EOF). The events of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina dramatically illustrate the need for a proactive emergency management and preparedness program. Communities that are unprepared and simply react without prior planning will suffer substantial losses of lives and property. While Chincoteague has been fortunate not to have major damage or loss of life from recent storms and other emergencies, one need only remember the devastating effects of the 1962 Ash Wednesday storm, an unforeseen weather phenomenon. The report is organized into three categories: (1) Primary Recommendations; (2) a Plan of Action; and (3) Recommended Changes to the Existing Plan. I am pleased to offer my expertise to assist the Town in the further development of this critical Plan.

Executive Summary

Portions of the Town of Chincoteague's Emergency Operations Plan describe what needs to be planned but not what the plan is for specific emergencies. The Plan lacks the details of each specific action that must be taken by the operating components of the Plan. The Plan needs to be the step-by-step guidebook for staff to address any contemplated emergency. Once the Plan is developed, staff needs to test the plan in tabletop and full field exercises. Exercising a plan enables the Town to identify and correct flaws or weaknesses in the Plan before it must be fully implemented. Additionally, the Plan must be kept updated and annual exercises ensure that the Plan remains current.

Lack of knowledge and training relating to the specifics of the Plan, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) will hamper the Plan's successful implementation. If the staff is not trained in NIMS and ICS, the Town may be denied certain grants and aid from State and Federal sources. The Town is fortunate to have an excellent Emergency Coordinator. Bryan Rush is very knowledgeable of emergency management procedures and has done an excellent job in the initial development of the Plan. But one person cannot carry the burden of the Plan alone. In addition to the staff being fully engaged in emergency preparedness, it is critical to the overall viability of the Plan to have a designated and trained backup for Bryan in the event that he is not available or present on the Island during an emergency event.

1. Primary Recommendations

- The operating components of the Town government have not completed their portions of the EPO, as required. Each component must develop written procedures which outline specifically how they will prepare for and respond to an emergency as well as how they will recover from the consequences of that emergency event, if necessary. The plans should include actions that each component will initiate to be prepared for events such as fires, floods, hurricanes and/or northeaster storms, i.e. checklists of actions to take 72,48, and 24 hours prior to the arrival of the anticipated storm. These actions would include preparation of equipment and supplies, pre-positioning of equipment and supplies, actions to prevent damages to property, and recovery plans and staffing for possible extended work hours.
- A plan is of little value if it is only known by a small group of officials and few, if any, residents of the community. Efforts must be made to brief Town Council, component staff, and most importantly, residents of the community.
- The Plan must also be briefed and coordinated with Accomack County, United States Coast Guard, FEMA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department, possibly NASA (if their facilities may be involved), the Fire Department, and any medical or civilian personnel who maybe involved in its implementation, for example, Town doctors, nurses, electric and gas representatives. It is also important to learn what actions these parties will initiate during emergencies to ensure well-coordinated responses. This process cannot be a one time event. Personnel and policies and procedures in these organizations periodically change; these changes require new, updated briefings.
- A key component of emergency response on the Island is the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD). Because it is not part of the Town government, it is not included in the EOF. I strongly recommend that a meeting be held with the Chief, CVFD, to determine how their plans (if there are any) can be incorporated into the Town EOF. The lack of coordination between fire, police, and community officials during Katrina was a major factor in the breakdown of the responses to that catastrophe. If needed, the Town should enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the CVFD to clearly define each organizations role in emergency responses.
- An Exercise Program should be implemented to permit the staff and other participating responders, to practice responding to various emergencies. Exercises permit responders to improve their skills and most importantly reveal areas in which plans need revision and corrections. The Exercise Program should begin with Command Post Exercises for key management and field supervisors as well as supporting organizations from the community, i.e. Accomack County, USCG, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, etc. These exercises should be both tabletop and field exercises, conducted at least annually, and periodically involve community participation.
- The Town has adopted a resolution recognizing the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the use of the Incident Command System (ICS). Although these very important systems have been recognized, few members of the staff and management have received any training in NIMS or ICS. At a minimum, all members of the Town Council and key staff members of the Town government should receive a briefing on this

subject. Police supervisors should take the ICS courses which have been identified by the Department of Homeland Security. These courses are available on-line. Bryan Rush is very familiar with NIMS and ICS.

Storms, fires, floods and other emergencies may hamper the delivery of essential utility services such as water, electric, gas and other services provided by the Town Police and Public Works Departments. A survivability assessment should be conducted of the key infrastructure of the Island. This assessment first would begin with an identification of the key infrastructure. The assessment would determine if additional measures are needed to prevent, protect, respond and recover from events happening at their facilities. For example, how secure is the electrical generator at the Town Office? Will it survive a flood? What are the preventative maintenance measures taken? Is it tested frequently at full load? How secure is the water distribution system on the Island and at the Pump Station? Is the supply tamper-proof? What measures will be taken if there is a disruption or contamination?

Fires can be devastating to a Town's operations. What would the Town government do if there was a major fire in the Town Building? Are there plans to relocate? Does the Town have secure backup records, most specifically, personnel, taxation and financial records? The Town should have a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which outlines how the Town will recover from an event which necessitates relocation. Planning should include a designated location, plans for computer equipment, furniture, communications, etc. Once the Plan is developed, a briefing should be conducted to ensure appropriate personnel are knowledgeable of the Plan.

One of the greatest challenges facing the Town is how to communicate to the residents of the Island prior to and during an emergency. This challenge is complicated during the summer when it may be necessary to communicate to over 15,000 vacationers. Efforts should be initiated to help residents to be better prepared for emergencies. Communications can be accomplished through Emergency Preparedness brochures distributed by the Town via water bills and through home rental offices and hotels. The Town web page should be modified to have a prominent Front Page link for Emergencies and Emergency Preparedness pages that detail emergency plans through the use of checklists and contact information, evacuation routes and shelter sites. Remember that most residents will turn to this site in the face of eminent danger so information should be no more than one click away. Further study needs to be done to determine how to communicate best with the community during an emergency. The Charter Communication option appears to no longer be viable since only a minority of residents subscribe to cable. Hotels and rental home companies should be included in the system to communicate to the visiting population. The existence and function of the County's 911 reverse dialing system needs to be publicized, particularly to elderly residents who may be confused by the recorded messages. Limitations and uses for the system should be clearly communicated so that residents will not depend on it in situations when it will not be employed.

- Consideration should be given to the use of Memorandums of Agreement (MO As). Support from surrounding communities and organizations is dependent upon friendships that have developed over the years. To ensure continuance of these relationships, written MO As should be signed that clearly outline the agreements that have been established. These MOAs help eliminate confusion when parties on both sides unfamiliar with previous verbal agreements question actions being taken. MOAs also help establish command and

control.

- A large emergency event such as the 1962 flood will quickly overwhelm the resources of the Town government. Meetings with church and civic organizations are recommended to determine how these organizations can help in a relief effort. For example, members of Island churches provided services following Hurricane Katrina. These members have valuable experience that could be employed to assist the Town. Services that could be provided are managing local shelters, feeding evacuees, and helping evacuate persons by vehicle or boat. Other possible organizations include the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Charter Boat Association. Organization of these supporting organizations will greatly assist the Town Emergency Preparedness Program.

2. Plan of Action

- 0 Establish a Planning Team (one member from each operating component) to work with Bryan Rush to complete the Plan. The Team should include a Fire Department representative.
- 0 Reissue the Plan and brief the staff and management on the Plan.
- 0 Provide NIMS and ICS briefing and training to appropriate personnel.
- 0 Coordinate the Plan with County, USCG, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service, Marine Police, and any other organization deemed essential to implementation of the Plan.
- 0 Develop a communications plan to communicate preparedness measures and actions during emergencies. Preparedness information to include evacuation procedures should be available at the beginning of hurricane season.
- 0 Schedule a Command Post exercise to include Town management officials, Town operating components and organizations from the surrounding area. Recommend a hurricane scenario. The exercise should take place not later than June, 2007.
- 0 Promote emergency preparedness to Island businesses. Promotion is particularly important to businesses hosting visitors. Owners should understand this could be a matter of reducing their liability. Information to assist their planning could be provided by the Town through specific Island-related information and links to the Department of Homeland Security.

3. Recommended Changes to the Existing Plan

The following recommendations are made for changes or additions to the Basic Emergency Operations Plan with reference to the pertinent pages and paragraphs.

Page 4, f A. Add "northeaster storm" to the potential hazards to Chincoteague. Northeaster storms have created more damage on Chincoteague than hurricanes.

Page 5, f E. Remove "manufacturing plants" in this sentence and add "tourist facilities." Tourism (hotels, campgrounds, home rentals) are the major industry on Chincoteague.

Page 6, | B. Add County Sheriff Department, Marine Police and State Police to the list of organizations that can augment the Town.

PaRe 9, | 8. Add placement of barriers/traffic cones to duties. During flood conditions, roads should be blocked.

Page 10. Description of duties for Harbor Master are too vague. Ask Harbor Master to provide a list of activities he would perform before and during an emergency, such as a northeaster or hurricane and add those duties to the plan.

Page 10 f 12. Duties for the Town Building Department are vague. Specific duties should be assigned so the Department will know what is expected of them during emergencies.

Page 12 *|f J and M. The Plan states that heads of operating agencies will develop and maintain detailed plans and standard operating procedures. Plans for the agencies do not exist.

The paragraph further states that agencies will be responsible for the protection and preservation of records essential for governmental operations. No plans or procedures appear to be in place. A detailed plan to indicate how and where essential records will be protected should be developed and implemented. This project should begin with an assessment of records to determine which are most critical. Records include both electronic and paper copies. Critical records should be stored in a backup form in a secure location off the island.

Page 14,|R. Reference is made to mutual aid agreements. There appear to be no mutual aid agreements in existence. While emergency assistance more than likely will be available to Chincoteague from a variety of sources, written mutual aid agreements would clearly outline the responsibilities and functions of the responding organizations and the Town. Lack of written agreements can lead to confusion during emergencies while written agreements can result in well-coordinated responses.

Page 14, fU. The plan states that the EOF should be exercised, revised and readopted every four years. It appears that the Plan has not been revised or readopted in the past 4 years. The Plan should be exercised annually, not every four years. Implementation of plans that have not been exercised will result in poor performance and inadequate response to an emergency. The Plan should require at a minimum an annual exercise.

Page 15,1 W.I. The statement that training and test exercises will be conducted periodically is too vague and will result in little or no exercises and tests. Be specific and state a clear objective for training and exercises.

Page 22. Is there a reason to omit the Harbor Master? Who would perform this

function if the Harbor Master was not available.

Page 25. Representatives for the USCG and Town Public Works Department need to be updated and perhaps others. Recommend a date be noted on this page to provide an update of the distribution list. An update needs to be made whenever there is a change in personnel. Assurances should be made that incoming personnel have a copy of the Plan and are briefed as to their responsibilities.

Page 26. The Plan requires periodic training for the EOC staff. Has the training been conducted, particularly for newly assigned personnel?

The Chief of Police has been assigned the responsibility for public information and rumor control. During most emergencies, the Chief of Police will be very busy and cannot assume the primary role for public communications. Recommend that a person be designated as the Public Information Officer (PIO). This person would be the primary person responsible for coordinating press activities, scheduling press briefings, and arranging for the Mayor, Chief of Police or other appropriate Town officials to speak to the press. It is better at times to have a lower ranking person to serve as the PIO since they are not in the decision making role. A press plan should be developed and, if possible, key personnel should receive some training on how to deal with the press.

Page 35. Is the equipment listed for the EOC pre-positioned and inventoried at least annually? Where is it located? It is very important that the EOC staff knows where to find the equipment and supplies. It is also very important that the supplies and equipment are adequate and in working order.

Page 37-47. Are there EOP standard operating procedures regarding the reporting and status forms. This issue relates to EOC staff training.

Page 48. The map in the Plan is dated July 1997. Does the EOC have a more recent map noting new roads and lanes?

Page 54. The Plan states that procedures should be in place to handle public inquiries and the need for a bank of phones and trained operators. Is there a specific plan to accomplish this important function? Who will manage this function? Where will this be located? There should be a standard operating procedure (SOP) for this important function.

Page 56. Add WCTG to radio station list.

Page 61. Evacuation and Routes. The Plan divides the island into five zones. This would require at least 5 police officers and would appear to be extremely difficult to control. Recommend that the Chief of Police review this plan to determine if it is feasible.

Page 62. Shelter Operations. The Plan outlines procedures and responsibilities for evacuees from Chincoteague to the mainland; however, there may be a need for

temporary shelter for persons displaced for a localized emergency such as a major fire, HAZMAT, minor flooding, or other emergency. For example, there may also be an emergency similar to the 1962 storm in which there was no warning and the island flooded. A local shelter plan should be developed and arrangements made to use a facility (Firehouse, Community Center, church or other facility). Coordinate with local churches to see if they could assist with this action.

Page 76, f F. The Plan requires heads of Town agencies to develop detailed procedures to accomplish their assign tasks for hurricanes. Have these procedures been developed? In addition to detailed procedures, agencies should develop checklists of functions to perform prior, during and after an emergency. For example, Public Works' checklist should include checking street drains at least 48 hours prior to arrival of a predicted hurricane.

Page 79. _____ Emergency Management Actions—Hurricanes. The Plan references a variety of plans that need to be made but these plans should already be made and implemented prior to the onset of an emergency. Each identified action should include a written SOP for the EOC and various departments of the Town government and be exercised, at least, annually.

Page 84.14a(2X) What is a Hurricane Response Team? Who supplies personnel and equipment for the Team?

Page 86. _____ Saffer-Simpson Hurricane Scale. This scale is a good reference material but it does not need to be in the operations' plan. The same is true for the Hurricane History of Coastal Virginia and the Explanation of Tides Forecasts. Information on tides in the Plan should be specific to Chincoteague and regularly updated.

Page 96, f la. Have plans and procedures been developed as required by the Plan?

Page 97. _____ Damage Assessment Teams. Team members need to be updated. Floyd Mason has moved from Chincoteague. Have the members been trained on the assessment plan and on how to document their assessments?

Page 105. Has the Town and/or Fire Department completed an assessment of types of potential hazardous materials that are transported to the Island and where they are located? Tier II reporting hazardous material locations on Chincoteague are in the Plan. Are police officers and firemen familiar with the locations and are they trained to recognize HAZMAT warning labels? For example, several hotels have swimming pools which require hazardous chemicals. Does the Fire Department have protective gear for their personnel to deal with chemical spills and do they have any monitoring equipment to protect the public? If not, who would support a HAZMAT incident on the Island? What is their response time? Are there Memorandum of Agreements (MO As) in place with these first responders?

Page 114. Resource Shortage. Information in tMs section appears to be "boilerplate" language from the State plan. Chincoteague's Plan should focus on what resources are critical to the Island. The water supply and electrical power could be disrupted. How will the Town deal with those temporary shortages? Are there plans? Shortages could be impacted by a failure in our bridges to the Island. What are Delmarva Power's plans if there was a break in

the cables to the Island? What if the causeway is inaccessible? Or the Island is inaccessible? What is the Island's reserve supply of water on the Island if the lines to the Island are disrupted? What plans are in place should construction of the new bridges temporarily disrupt electrical or water supplies to the Island? TMs information must be known to the Town. Further, contingency plans need to be in place if there is to be a quick response to the shortage.

Page 118. Medical and Health Services. This section duplicates the County's Plan. Have there been any discussions between the Town and County Health Department regarding how the County will respond during an emergency? A large scale emergency may affect other areas of the County besides Chincoteague. Such a situation would impact the County's ability to service multiple areas. What will be expected of Chincoteague in this event? How will the County prioritize its resources? What plans have been made with local doctors to respond to an emergency? Who is Chincoteague's point of contact with the County Health Department? Who is Chincoteague's point of contact with the County's Emergency Coordinator?

Page 123. Terrorism. TMs section duplicates the County's plan. While Chincoteague may be low on the list of targets for terrorism, there are many forms of terrorism. Who would have anticipated that someone would shoot school girls in a small Amish community! Is the Town Police Department prepared for the unexpected incident? Is there a specific plan of coordination with the County Sheriff? Who is in charge, the Sheriff or the Town COP? This information should be in the Police Department's SOP.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 26, 2007

TO: Public Safety and Transportation Committee

VIA: Robert Ritter Jr., Town Manager

FROM: E. Bryan Rush, Emergency Services Coordinator

RE: Motion Request for Budget Inclusion

The Emergency Operations Plan for the Town of Chincoteague is under review by members of the Public Safety and Transportation Committee. Upon completion of the review and update, the plan will need to be re-written in its entirety.

The re-writing of the plan will require many hours. Currently we do not have the staff, or the time to undertake such a daunting task I have contacted Mrs. Elaine Meil at the Accomack Northampton Planning District Commission and requested a quote to write the plan for us. Mrs. Meil quoted \$11,000 to complete the task which will include 25 copies bound in folders. Upon completion we will have a very workable document that can be maintained and updated in-house by our planner with the help of myself and the other department heads.

I am requesting the Public Safety and Transportation Committee consider a request for motion:

To recommend council to include \$11,000 in the FY-08 budget for the re-writing of the Town of Chincoteague Emergency Operations Plan.

Upon council's approval this will make funds available to begin a re-write in mid to late summer.

Town of Chincoteague
Emergency Operations Plan Update

I. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Commission shall provide the following services in order to update the Town of Chincoteague Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to meet the current requirements of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) under the Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 1973.

The services shall include:

- a) Working with the Town of Chincoteague, VDEM, and other agencies and organizations to obtain all data, maps, and other information required for the EOP.
- b) Working with the Town of Chincoteague to prepare a Draft EOP for submission to VDEM in xxxxxxxxxxxx.
- c) Providing, if necessary, a Revised Draft EOP based on VDEM review comments.
- d) Assisting the Town with adoption of the EOP by xxxxxxxxxxxx.
- e) Printing and distributing twenty-five copies of the EOP.

Proposed Budget

Director of Planning	40 hours	@ \$22.00 = \$ 880	
Director of Administration	20 hours	@ \$27.00 = \$ 540	
Coordinator	160 hours	@ \$20.80 = \$ 3,328	
Planning Technician	90 hours	@ \$12.00 = \$ 1,080	
	Benefits	@ 31.68% = \$ 1,850	
	Indirect	@ 46.72% = \$ 2,725	
		Sub-total	\$ 10,403
Printing, Binders			<u>\$ 597</u>
		Total	\$11,000